



**Pacific Northwest Region
Malheur National Forest
541-575-3000
www.fs.usda.gov/malheur**

News Release

Teresa Gallagher 541-575-3144
Shilo Burton 541-575-3008

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Forest seeks public feedback on areas for snowmobile operation

JOHN DAY, OR – Malheur NF has begun meeting with local snowmobile clubs to identify preferred routes in response to the recently released Regional snowmobile policy that requires Forests to designate specific forest areas for snowmobile operation.

The Malheur National Forest currently has an estimated 850-mile network of trails; most of them on forest roads, which are groomed by local snowmobile clubs. Discussions have begun with the local groups in Grant, Harney and Baker Counties as existing groomed trails provide linkages between the counties.

“In the past, forests were not required to specify where snowmobiles and other over-snow motorized vehicles can travel,” said Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin. The new policy, which was issued in January, requires each forest to designate roads, trails, and areas where such over-snow vehicles are allowed. “We are fortunate to have worked with local groups in the past to identify these areas.” The Forest will eventually use this information to publish over-snow vehicle maps.

“I was pleased we had a productive conversation about the excellent work the local groups had done in the past and that this was going to be the basis for the new CFR order that will need to be signed,” said Bob Phillips, President of the Grant County Snowballers, about his meeting with the Malheur National Forest concerning the recent Subpart C – Over the Snow regulations. “We appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns and believe we were heard. If anyone has concerns about this process please contact a member of the local Snowballer group. We will be happy to answer your questions.”

Snowmobiles and other motorized vehicles will remain prohibited in the wilderness areas.

Find more on Winter Recreation on the Malheur at:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/malheur/recreation/wintersports>.

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